

What is claimed:

1. An enforceable property right for use within a system for controlling the manner of use of an item in accordance with usage rights, said property right comprising:
  - an item ticket specifying an item for which said item ticket can be redeemed, said ticket having a security mechanism incorporated therein; and
  - a license associated with said item ticket, said license including usage rights specifying a manner of use for redeeming said item ticket and means for unlocking said security mechanism.
2. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said license further includes conditions that must be satisfied to activate said means for unlocking.
3. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said item ticket includes a description of the item.
4. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said item ticket includes an ID correlated to the item.
5. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said item ticket includes limitations specified by said license.
6. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 5, wherein said limitations are expressed as conditions.
7. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said security mechanism is encryption.
8. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said item includes goods.

9. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said item includes services.
10. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said license includes a specification of a corresponding item ticket.
11. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said item is information.
12. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 11, wherein said license further comprises usage rights specifying access to the information and conditions of the access.
13. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 12, wherein said conditions include a security or trust rating.
14. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said item is an online service.
15. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 14, wherein said license further comprises usage rights specifying access to the online service and conditions of the access.
16. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 15, wherein said conditions include a security or trust rating.
17. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 2, wherein said license also includes post-license conditions that do not need to be satisfied to activate said security mechanism and wherein said unlocking mechanism permits a specification of said item and said post-license conditions to be rendered.

18. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 2, wherein said license includes state variables.
19. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said unlocking mechanism is operative to permit the item ticket to be rendered as a human readable description.
20. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said unlocking mechanism is operative to permit the item ticket to be rendered as a computer readable code.
21. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein said usage rights include meta-rights which permit rights in the item to be granted to downstream parties.
22. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein the item is a financial instrument.
23. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein the item is a legal document.
24. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 1, wherein the item is real estate.
25. A system for enforcing property rights in items by controlling the use of the items in accordance with usage rights, said system comprising:
  - a license device operative to associate a license with an item ticket specifying an item for which said item ticket can be redeemed and having a security mechanism incorporated therein, said license including usage rights specifying a manner of use for redeeming said item ticket and conditions for exercising said manner of use; and

a security component operative to enforce said license and unlock said security mechanism when said conditions are satisfied.

26. A system as recited in claim 25 wherein said security component comprises a client component in a user device and an activation device for providing at least a portion of said client component.

27. A system as recited in claim 26, further comprising a vendor device for permitting a user to select an item and usage rights to be incorporated into said license generated by said license device.

28. A method for enforcing a property right within a system for controlling the manner of use of an item in accordance with usage rights, said method comprising:

parsing a license associated with an item ticket specifying an item for which said item ticket can be redeemed and having a security mechanism incorporated therein, said license including usage rights specifying a manner of use for redeeming said item ticket and conditions for exercising the manner of use;

determining if said conditions are satisfied; and

unlocking said security mechanism if said conditions are satisfied.

29. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said item ticket includes a description of the item.

30. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said item ticket includes an ID correlated to the item.

31. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said item ticket includes limitations specified by said license.

32. A method as recited in claim 31, wherein said limitations are expressed as conditions.

33. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said security mechanism is encryption and said unlocking step comprises executing a decryption algorithm.
34. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said item includes goods.
35. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said item includes services.
36. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said license includes a specification of a corresponding item ticket.
37. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said item is information.
38. A method as recited in claim 37, wherein said license further comprises usage rights specifying access to the information and conditions of the access.
39. A method as recited in claim 38, wherein said conditions include a security or trust rating and wherein said determining step comprises determining if a user's rating corresponds to the trust rating.
40. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said item is an online service.
41. A method as recited in claim 40, wherein said license further comprises usage rights specifying access to the online service and conditions of the access.
42. A method as recited in claim 41, wherein said conditions include a security or trust rating and wherein said determining step comprises determining if a user's rating corresponds to the trust rating.
43. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said usage rights include meta-rights which permit rights in the item to be granted to downstream

parties and further comprising the steps of deriving rights from the meta-rights and generating a license including the derived rights.

44. An enforceable property right as recited in claim 28, wherein the item is a financial instrument.

45. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein the item is a legal document.

46. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein the item is real estate.